

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application. Claims 14-16 have been newly added herewith and claims 1-6 and 13 have been examined on the merits. Withdrawn method claims 7-12 have been amended to include all of the limitations of independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request rejoinder and allowance of claims 7-12 upon allowance of claim 1.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and Examiner Interview

On pages 3 to 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 2 and 4-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by McFarland et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,960,031). Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants' representative conducted a telephone interview with the Examiner on November 22, 2006 and thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended at that time. During the interview, the Examiner clarified the rejection. Particularly, the clarified that he considers the opening in the substrate 120 as the first recess, the sleeve 124 as a second recess and pins 116 or 612 as an alignment guide member.

The Examiner also noted that while in MacFarland the alignment guide members 116, 118 were fixed to the optical component 105, that Figs. 12 and 13 of the present application show that the optical component 31 is removably connected to the guide pins 24. Therefore, the Examiner indicated that amending claim 1 to recite that the alignment guide member is "removably engageable in an alignment hole of the optical component" would distinguish claim 1 from MacFarland. Applicants have amended claim 1 as suggested by the Examiner.

Accordingly, claim 1 is now believed to be allowable and claims 2 and 4-6 are believed to be allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

On pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 3 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McFarland. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Claims 3 and 13 depend from claim 1. As discussed above, claim 1 has been distinguished from McFarland. Furthermore, it would not have been obvious to modify McFarland to correct the above-noted deficiencies of McFarland with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, claims 3 and 13 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

Furthermore, the present application teaches that the second recess formed portion may be formed of an inorganic material because such materials have an advantage of a relatively small thermal expansion coefficient (*see page 11, lines 3-8*). The second recess portion may also be made of a resin layer because of the high machinability allows highly accurate machining at low cost (*see page 11, lines 9-14*). McFarland recognizes neither the advantages of having a second recess with high machinability or a relatively small thermal expansion coefficient. Therefore, claims 3 and 13 are further allowable at least because it would not have been obvious to modify McFarland as suggested by the Examiner.

New Claims

Applicants have added new claims 14-16 in order to provide a more varied scope of protection. Claims 14-16 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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